

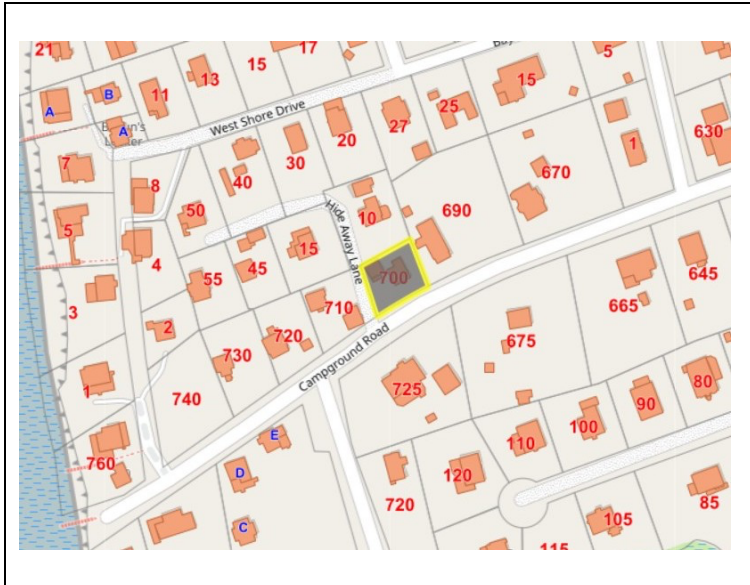
FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for
Organization: Eastham Historical Commission
Date (month / year): April 2025

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

7A-33

Orleans

N

EAS.297,
298

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Campground Road
Area

Address: 700 Campground Road

Historic Name: William B. Higgins House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1920

Source: Eastham Tax Commitment Books

Style/Form: Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown/ William B. Higgins

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete block

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Wood and asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Small cabin (ca. 1950, EAS.298, Photo 2)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Enclosure of front porch (date unknown)

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.10 acres

Setting: This property is located on a small parcel on the north side of Campground Road. The surrounding area includes early-20th century cottage lots, and the area is now built out with modest cottages and houses from the early-20th to the early-21st centuries. This house is set fairly close to the street. A clamshell driveway leads to a small cottage west of the main house. The parcel in front of the house is landscaped with lawn, mature trees, a split rail fence and foundation plantings.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

700 CAMPGROUND ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

N

EAS.297,
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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This is one of a number of Colonial Revival-style cottages in the immediate vicinity (built by the same person) that employ a gambrel roof, including its neighbor to the north (45 Hide Away Lane, EAS.337). The form of this small house consists of the 1½-story main block and what very likely began as an open porch across the front elevation that is now fully enclosed with a centered entrance. There is a shallow, one-story ell across part of the rear elevation. The house rests on a concrete block foundation, and the elevations are clad in weathered wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The lower portions of the gambrel roof are clad in wood shingles and the upper portions are clad in asphalt shingles. The windows have all been replaced and now include paired casement windows on the first story set in projecting frames.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay in Orleans and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This property is connected to the cottage development around Campground Road - one of the three earliest roads to extend west to Cape Cod Bay from the central sections of Eastham. Despite the early development of the road, which was established to serve the Methodist camp meetings in the mid-19th century, the great majority of houses that border it, especially to the north, are 20th-century vernacular summer cottages and retirement houses.

One of the early subdivisions at the west end of Campground Road was recorded in 1912 by Alonzo K. Higgins. Eastham-born Alonzo K. Higgins (1846-1918) married Elizabeth W. Rogers (1847-1923) in Orleans in 1870. He was listed as a farmer in census records throughout his life, but he was also very active in cottage development in the early-20th century.

The 1912 subdivision consisted of 34 "Cottage Lots" on the north side of Campground Road that included what is now the southern portion of Bay Road and West Shore Drive (Figure 2).¹ Four large parcels were aligned along the bay while smaller lots with 75-foot frontages were crowded in the interior. All but one of the bay parcels have been divided into smaller lots; some of the small interior lots have been combined.

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 2/ Page 123.

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In December, 1912, Alonzo Higgins sold Lots 6 and 8 in his subdivision to William B. Higgins of Eastham.² This house was built on Lot 6. Eastham-born William B. Higgins (1875-1935) married Bertha H. Brewer (1880-1933) in Eastham in 1898. William Higgins owned other parcels in the Campground area, and he was very likely related to Alonzo Higgins, but their kinship is not yet known. According to census records, William Higgins was a house carpenter, one of many in Eastham in the early-20th century. He almost certainly built this house, and he appears to have kept this house as a rental property – he was listed living on Nauset Road in the 1929 Directory. According to the Eastham Tax Commitment records, starting in 1920, he was assessed for an increasing number of cottages. It is not possible to know exactly when this cottage was built from those records, but a ca. 1920 construction date appears reasonable (the Tax Books for 1903-1919 are not available).

In 1938, his estate sold this property to Mildred L. Blakey of Nashua, NH.³ The house changed hands six more times between 1938 and 1966. In that year, Bruce C. and Elizabeth A. Merrill of Yarmouth sold it to Donald R. and Judith A. Turpin of Hanover, MA, and it remains in their family.⁴

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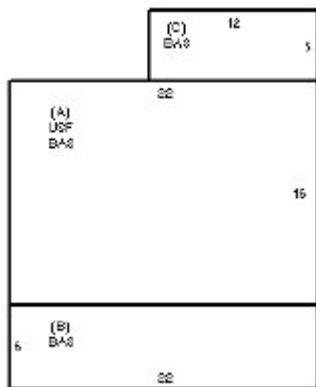


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.



Photo 2. View looking northeast.

² Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 363/ Page 115.

³ Book 542/ Page 382.

⁴ Book 1401/ Page 307.

